

EDINA PARK BOARD

7:30 p.m.

January 14, 1997

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Dovolis, Beth Hall, Jim Fee, Dave Crowther, Andy Herring, Bill Jenkins, Jean Rydell, Becky Bennett, Andrew Montgomery, Mike Burley, Phyllis Kohler

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Damman, Anne White, Shirley Taylor, Pete Anderson

I. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 10, 1996 PARK BOARD MINUTES

John Dovolis MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 10, 1996 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Andy Herring SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. EDINA AQUATIC CENTER

Mr. Keprios noted that this was on the agenda by the request of Mr. Herring so the Park Board can have an opportunity to look at in detail where we are to date with the renovation of the aquatic center. Mr. Keprios indicated that he hopes the staff report gave everyone a good idea of where we are at.

Mr. Herring replied that the reason he wanted this to be on the agenda is to have a better understanding of what will and will not be done. He noted that he was very impressed with the original design and beautiful drawings Mr. MacHolda originally shared with the Park Board.

Mr. MacHolda explained to the Park Board that they were basically looking at three things: demolishing and rebuilding the bathhouse, expanding the wading pool and replacing the worn filtration system. Those are the three items that really needed to be accomplished. He indicated that they first met with the architects in July where they brainstormed and came up with a conceptual master plan, however, the dollars available would not permit everything to be done. Mr. MacHolda stated that the existing bathhouse was torn down and is being rebuilt. The wading pool has been demolished and will be enlarged and the pool filtration room will be gutted and completely renewed. He indicated that an item that was specified but eliminated was the larger play structure for the zero depth pool. Other items on the conceptual master plan but not pursued at this time were the lily pad walk, sand volleyball and the sand play area as well as expanding the perimeter fence.

Mr. Jenkins asked about the road and Mr. MacHolda responded that it is not going to be done, however, they are going to continue to utilize the rear service entry as well as provide some ADA parking in the back.

Mr. Herring asked what the cost of the additional items would be and Mr. MacHolda responded they have never calculated that, however, he would like to see the architectural firm put all of the ideas into a concrete master plan with dollars attached. Mr. MacHolda explained that he hopes once the current construction is done we can take the next step with the architectural firm and look at the other items.

Mr. MacHolda explained on the drawing the old bathhouse and new bathhouse. Mr. MacHolda stated that initially they were looking at a 1,500 bather capacity bathhouse, however, that was sized down 1,000 square feet and is now a 850 bather capacity bathhouse. Mr. MacHolda pointed out that two years ago the average bather load was 1,400 a day. This year we saw 120,000 bathers. Mr. MacHolda explained that the bather load is looked at in two ways. One is the water surface and the other is by the number of showers and stalls. We are currently attempting to add two showers and two stalls to give our bathhouse a 1,000 bather capacity number. This would match our water surface.

Ms. Bennett asked what is going on right now with the construction of the bathhouse. Mr. MacHolda explained that the bathhouse is currently being built, and it is projected to be completed by April 1st. Therefore, there is no reason the main pool cannot open on Memorial Weekend. However, he does not want to do that because the wading pool may not be done until July 1st and he explained he wants to minimize the amount of construction with the general public as much as possible. Therefore, the pool will open a week later on June 7th as it is stated in the Activities Directory.

Mr. MacHolda stated they have clearly spent the money that was allocated and were able to do the three things they really wanted to do, build a new bathhouse, expand the wading pool, and bring the filtration/sanitation system up to speed. These are the items the public was told we were going to do and we are meeting that obligation.

Mr. MacHolda stated that the one item he would really like to see for next spring's opening is the play structure, he really wishes it would be renewed and enlarged. It was asked how much money that would cost and Mr. MacHolda replied it would cost approximately \$140,000. He pointed out that the zero depth pool area bather capacity is 400. Mr. Keprios noted that there was one council member who was of the opinion that we should do the larger structure. Mr. Burley asked why the rest of the council was against the idea. Mr. Keprios responded because the project is already more than \$300,000 over budget on a 1.1 million dollar project.

Mr. Herring indicated that according to the staff report we are going to take \$200,000 out of the Developer's Fund. Mr. Herring then noted that Mr. Jenkins had previously suggested using a revenue bond for this in which this would be ideally suited for that kind

of financing. Mr. Crowther asked how can we expect the council to approve something like that when we have already gone through the whole bond process and did not estimate correctly. He noted that he doesn't think the public would stand for that. Mr. Herring suggested giving up all of the signs that are in the budget and look to where else there may be money available.

Mr. Dovolis asked Mr. Herring to give some background on why are we revisiting this issue. Mr. Herring noted that he thinks the aquatic center is one of the most highly used and best assets in Edina. It's an asset that pays for itself and is used by a broad spectrum of people in the community and is used by all ages. He stated he is concerned that we are cutting and skimping every step of the way on this and we are going to have competing facilities. He commented that we don't need to have the cadillac but we should have a good facility. He indicated that he wanted to revisit this to be sure he understood what was and was not going to happen. Mr. Herring stated that he wanted to hear what Mr. MacHolda's priorities are as to what he would like to see done. He stated that he would really like to see the master plan done and wants to make sure that we are not doing things that are limiting us from in the future doing the master plan to make this a real quality facility.

Mr. Dovolis indicated that he agrees on all of the points but what he is questioning, and maybe this should be directed to Mr. MacHolda, is this truly the vision and is this something that's going to take us into the year 2000 and beyond. Mr. Dovolis asked, are we shortchanging ourselves by not providing these things now or should we be looking at a plan to implement these items down the road over a series of years. Mr. MacHolda responded that he agrees with the council member in that he thinks we are making a mistake by not finding the dollars to do the play structure now. Mr. MacHolda pointed out that the aquatic center could lose a great deal of season tickets and revenue next year and beyond. The aquatic center has been profitable because it offered something that nobody else had. Mr. MacHolda indicated that this is the one item that he would really like to see done even if we need to lease to purchase. He also noted that he would like to go forward with a master plan not necessarily in 1997 but hopefully in 1998.

Mr. Keprios commented to the Park Board that if they would take a good, strong, hard look at the long-term future of this facility we need to sit down and establish what do you want, how do you want this facility to function in the next 10, 20 and 25 years. Do you want it to be a competitive pool or do you want it to be a family aquatic center. These are some real tough decisions and some real key philosophical decisions that need to be made. There is no question that St. Louis Park is going to draw business away from us. However, these are some questions that need to be answered before we dive in and start to move this and change that. Mr. Keprios commented that futuristically before we start making any more changes there should be a master plan like Mr. Herring suggested that we all buy into and work towards.

Mr. Burley asked is there a way to get a handle on how much all of this will cost. Mr. MacHolda stated that he knows the play structure is \$140,000. He noted that for all of the

other items that we are looking at we would need to make a commitment with the architectural firm for approximately \$5,000 to do a master plan, which he feels should have been done a long time ago.

Mr. Herring noted that his suggestion would be to ask the staff to assist the Park Board to think about alternative ways to finance or to pay for the additional play structure. The second item would be to recommend to spend a little money to work up a master plan that we would try to develop over a certain period of time.

Mr. Montgomery indicated that he is concerned with some of the deletes. He noted that he feels in the heat of the summer there really should be air conditioning because you have people working there and what would they do if someone had heat exhaustion. Mr. Dovolis commented that the air conditioning is listed as being very expensive and commented he would like to take a closer look at that.

Mr. Herring MOVED TO RECOMMEND THAT THE STAFF WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF A COMMITTEE FROM THE PARK BOARD PURSUE CREATIVE IDEAS FOR FINANCING AND ALSO COME UP WITH A RECOMMENDATION FOR THE PARK BOARD ON HOW TO ACQUIRE THIS NEW PLAY EQUIPMENT FOR THE ZERO DEPTH POOL. SECONDLY, TO RECOMMEND THAT WE GET AUTHORIZATION TO SPEND AN ESTIMATED \$5,000 FOR DEVELOPING A MASTER PLAN AND IF THAT COMMITTEE WOULD WORK WITH THE STAFF AND THEN COME BACK AND MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE PARK BOARD RELATIVE TO THAT MASTER PLAN. John Dovolis SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Herring indicated that he would like someone else to help him on the committee and Mr. Montgomery stated that he would.

Mr. Crowther asked Mr. MacHolda what he intends to do about the over-usage versus capacity situation. He asked him if he will keep people from using the pool when he reaches capacity. Mr. MacHolda replied that he has designed the bathhouse with the intent of always knowing the number of bathers pool side. He is having turn-style going in and a turn-style going out.

III. PARK AND RECREATION INTERN

Mr. Keprios introduced the recreation intern, Mike Damman, a graduate student from the University of Minnesota who has been attending a lot of the meetings and will be assigned some hands-on park development tasks. Mr. Damman is a resident of Edina and has been very active in the community. He served as chair of the playground equipment development committee for Countryside School. He is familiar with the town and is anxious to learn more about the parks and recreation.

IV. PARK REFERENDUM PROJECTS UPDATE

Mr. Keprios stated that hopefully he made all of the changes on the priority list that were mentioned at last month's Park Board meeting.

Mr. Montgomery indicated that his only concern is maybe we should do more of the little things because we get a lot of points for the cosmetic items. He suggested one of the shelter buildings or a major item be put on hold for a year or so to see where we are at financially. He noted that possibly Walnut Ridge could be put on hold which would be \$220,000 that we could bank for a year or so. Mr. Montgomery pointed out that he is concerned that a lot of these little projects are going to score more points with the neighborhoods that will affect more people than the shelter building in the northwest corner of Edina for \$220,000. Mr. Crowther stated that the residents were told we were going to build the shelter buildings. He indicated that he feels we sold the referendum on certain projects and we have to follow-up on them. Mr. Montgomery replied that he thought we said a lot of these things were going to happen. Mr. Crowther responded that we said certain ones were definitely going to be done before others and that the little cosmetic items were going to be done if we had enough money after doing the major items.

Mr. Fee asked Mr. Keprios what his thoughts were. Mr. Keprios indicated that the larger shelter buildings are something that we promised the community and he thinks it's something they are expecting. He noted that he has representatives from each of the neighborhoods serving on a task force committee and Jeff Arnold is representing the Walnut Ridge shelter building. Mr. Keprios indicated he could pose the question to these representatives about the possibility of delaying a shelter building.

Mr. Herring indicated that he thought we were going to receive interest through the bond issue fund earnings. Mr. Keprios stated that the finance director has indicated to him that we will receive approximately \$400,000 in interest when this is all said and done. However, everything needs to be completed by August 1, 1998, in order for us to receive all of the interest. Otherwise, it will be forfeited to the Federal Government. Mr. Keprios explained that what he is asking the Park Board to do at this time is to keep visiting the priority list because it was sold to the community as a priority list and we need to make good on that.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that he received a letter from the Arden Park neighborhood indicating that they do not want a parking lot at Arden Park which was a budgeted item for them. However, they would like to take that money and spend it on other things. Mr. Keprios indicated that he thinks it's wonderful they have a wish list, however, unfortunately we don't have the money to do everything on every neighborhood's wish list. He noted that we are going to see more of that. Mr. Keprios indicated that he hopes to accomplish as much of every neighborhood's wish lists as possible, however, for now we need to stay focused on what we promised and keep it by project not necessarily dollar per park.

Ms. Rydell asked how many kids are skating at Strachauer Park because she rarely sees people there and wanted to know how committed we are to spending \$20,000 for a hockey rink. Mr. Keprios noted that the argument has been that without a hockey rink it's not going to get much use when there is such a beautiful general open skating area nearby at Centennial Lakes. He indicated that he thinks the numbers will climb dramatically when a hockey rink is put in. Mr. Keprios commented that a lot of the outdoor skating takes place on the hockey rinks.

Mr. Anderson, resident of the Strachauer Park neighborhood, indicated that if you look at the demographics of the neighborhood you can see that there are a lot of kids who would make use of that facility. Also, the fact that there is a permanent warming house there makes it an ideal candidate to have permanent boards and a hard surface area for use year round.

V. OTHER

A. Comfort Stations - Mr. Keprios indicated that he originally thought the comfort stations would have unisex bathrooms, however, he now feels there should be both a men's and women's rest room. He noted that it will not be that much more expensive. Mr. Keprios explained that the comfort stations will open and close with electronic locks that we can program from City Hall. There will be comfort stations at Wooddale Park, Garden Park, Lake Cornelia Park and Lewis Park. Mr. Keprios indicated they are currently meeting with architects and there is a lot of planning going on.

B. Fred Richard's Golf Course - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that renaming the Normandale Golf Course to Fred Richard's Golf Course did unanimously pass with the City Council. Mr. Keprios noted that there will be a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony in the spring.

C. Adopt-A-Park - Mr. Montgomery asked what is happening with the Adopt-A-Park signs, people have adopted parks over two years ago and there still are no signs. Mr. Keprios indicated that Ms. Bertrand has informed him that we currently have all the signs at the Edina Public Works Building, however, they are painting the back side of them so they will look better. He noted right now it is not a high priority during the winter months.

D. Lewis Park Basketball Court - Mr. Burley asked what the status is of the basketball court at Lewis Park. Mr. Keprios indicated that the Basketball Association has indicated that they would be interested in donating finances necessary to construct a basketball court at Lewis Park. Mr. Montgomery asked if the neighborhood has been informed yet of the basketball court and Mr. Keprios indicated that he will be sending out a survey this month.

E. Senior Center - Ms. Rydell asked what the status is with the YMCA and the Senior Center. Mr. Keprios indicated there currently has not been a whole lot of movement on it. It's in the YMCA's court and they are struggling with whether or not they want to go forward with the relationship.

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

Dave Crowther MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:35 P.M. Jean Rydell SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.